

STATE OF  
NORTH CAROLINA  
DEPARTMENT OF  
ENVIRONMENT &  
NATURAL RESOURCES

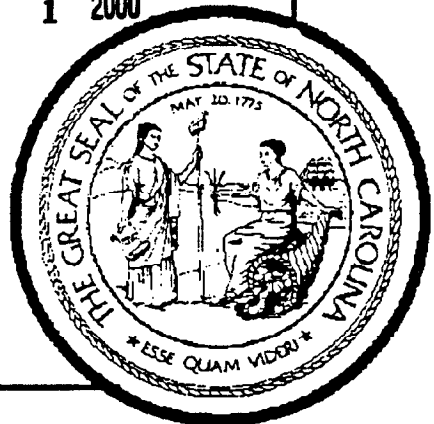


*Classifications and  
Water Quality Standards  
Assigned to the Waters  
of the Watauga River Basin*

Reprint from North Carolina  
Administrative Code: 15A NCAC 2B .0305  
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Division of Water Quality  
Raleigh, North Carolina



## SECTION .0300 - ASSIGNMENT OF STREAM CLASSIFICATIONS

**.0301 CLASSIFICATIONS: GENERAL**

(a) Schedule of Classifications. The classifications assigned to the waters of the State of North Carolina are set forth in the schedules of classifications and water quality standards assigned to the waters of the river basins of North Carolina, 15A NCAC 2B .0302 to .0317. These classifications are based upon the existing or contemplated best usage of the various streams and segments of streams in the basin, as determined through studies and evaluations and the holding of public hearings for consideration of the classifications proposed.

(b) Stream Names. The names of the streams listed in the schedules of assigned classifications were taken as far as possible from United States Geological Survey topographic maps. Where topographic maps were unavailable, U.S. Corps of Engineers maps, U.S. Department of Agriculture soil maps, and North Carolina highway maps were used for the selection of stream names.

(c) Classifications. The classifications assigned to the waters of North Carolina are denoted by the letters WS-I, WS-II, WS-III, WS-IV, WS-V, B, C, SA, SB, and SC in the column headed "class." A brief explanation of the "best usage" for which the waters in each class must be protected is given as follows:

**Fresh Waters**

- |               |  |
|---------------|--|
| Class WS-I:   | waters protected as water supplies which are in natural and undeveloped watersheds; in public ownership; point source discharges of treated wastewater are permitted pursuant to Rules .0104 and .0211 of this Subchapter; local programs to control nonpoint source and stormwater discharge of pollution are required; suitable for all Class C uses;  |
| Class WS-II:  | waters protected as water supplies which are generally in predominantly undeveloped watersheds; point source discharges of treated wastewater are permitted pursuant to Rules .0104 and .0211 of this Subchapter; local programs to control nonpoint source and stormwater discharge of pollution are required; suitable for all Class C uses;   |
| Class WS-III: | waters protected as water supplies which are generally in low to moderately developed watersheds; point source discharges of treated wastewater are permitted pursuant to Rules .0104 and .0211 of this Subchapter; local programs to control nonpoint source and stormwater discharge of pollution are required; suitable for all Class C uses;   |
| Class WS-IV:  | waters protected as water supplies which are generally in moderately to highly developed watersheds; point source discharges of treated wastewater are permitted pursuant to Rules .0104 and .0211 of this Subchapter; local programs to control nonpoint source and stormwater discharge of pollution are required; suitable for all Class C uses;  |
| Class WS-V:   | waters protected as water supplies which are generally upstream and draining to Class WS-IV waters or waters previously used for drinking water supply purposes or waters used by industry to supply their employees, but not municipalities or counties, with a raw drinking water supply source, although this type of use is not restricted to a WS-V classification; no categorical restrictions on watershed development or treated wastewater discharges are required, however, the Commission or its designee may apply appropriate management requirements as deemed necessary for the protection of downstream receiving waters (15A NCAC 2B .0203); suitable for all Class C uses; |
| Class B:      | primary recreation and any other usage specified by the "C" classification;  |
| Class C:      | aquatic life propagation and survival, fishing, wildlife, secondary recreation, and agriculture.   |

**Tidal Salt Waters**

- |           |   |
|-----------|---|
| Class SA: | shellfishing for market purposes and any other usage specified by the "SB" and "SC" classification; |
| Class SB: | primary recreation and any other usage specified by the "SC" classification;                        |
| Class SC: | aquatic life propagation and survival, fishing, wildlife, and secondary recreation.                 |

**Supplemental Classifications**

Trout Waters:	Suitable for natural trout propagation and maintenance of stocked trout;
Swamp Waters:	Waters which have low velocities and other natural characteristics which are different from adjacent streams;
NSW:	Nutrient Sensitive Waters which require limitations on nutrient inputs;
HQW:	High Quality Waters which are waters that are rated as excellent based on biological and physical/chemical characteristics through division monitoring or special studies, native and special native trout waters (waters and their tributaries) designated by the Wildlife Resources Commission, primary nursery areas (PNA) designated by the Marine Fisheries Commission and other functional nursery areas designated by the Wildlife Resources Commission, critical habitat areas designated by the Wildlife Resources Commission or the Department of Agriculture, all water supply watersheds which are either classified as WS-I or WS-II or those for which a formal petition for reclassification as WS-I or WS-II has been received from the appropriate local government and accepted by the Division of Environmental Management and all Class SA waters.
ORW:	Outstanding Resource Waters which are unique and special waters of exceptional state or national recreational or ecological significance which require special protection to maintain existing uses.
FWS:	Future Water Supply Waters which are waters intended for future drinking water supply purposes.

(d) Water Quality Standards. The water quality standards applicable to each classification assigned are those established in 15A NCAC 2B .0200, Classifications and Water Quality Standards Applicable to the Surface Waters of North Carolina, as adopted by the North Carolina Environmental Management Commission.

(e) Index Number.

- (1) Reading the Index Number. The index number appearing in the column so designated is an identification number assigned to each stream or segment of a stream, indicating the specific tributary progression between the main stem stream and the tributary stream.
- (2) Cross-Referencing the Index Number. The inclusion of the index number in the schedule is to provide a cross reference between the classification schedules and an alphabetic list of streams.

(f) Classification Date. The classification date indicates the date on which enforcement of the provisions of Section 143-215.1 of the General Statutes of North Carolina became effective with reference to the classification assigned to the various streams in North Carolina.

(g) Reference. Copies of the schedules of classifications adopted and assigned to the waters of the various river basins may be obtained at no charge by writing to:

Director  
Division of Environmental Management  
Department of Environment, Health, and Natural Resources  
Post Office Box 29535  
Raleigh, North Carolina 27626-0535

(h) Places where the schedules may be inspected:

Division of State Library  
Archives -- State Library Building  
109 E. Jones Street  
Raleigh, North Carolina.

(i) Unnamed Streams.

- (1) Any stream which is not named in the schedule of stream classifications carries the same classification as that assigned to the stream segment to which it is tributary except:
  - (A) unnamed streams specifically described in the schedule of classifications; or
  - (B) unnamed freshwaters tributary to tidal saltwaters will be classified "C"; or
  - (C) after November 1, 1986, any newly created areas of tidal saltwater which are connected to Class SA waters by approved dredging projects will be classified "SC" unless case-by-case reclassification proceedings are conducted.
- (2) The following river basins have different policies for unnamed streams entering other states or for specific areas of the basin:
 

Hiwassee River Basin (Rule .0302); Little Tennessee River Basin and Savannah River Drainage Area (Rule .0303); French Broad River Basin (Rule .0304); Watauga River Basin (Rule .0305); Broad River Basin (Rule .0306); New River Basin (Rule .0307); Catawba River Basin (Rule .0308); Yadkin-Pee Dee River

Basin (Rule .0309); Lumber River Basin (Rule .0310); Roanoke River Basin (Rule .0313); Tar-Pamlico River Basin (Rule .0316); Pasquotank River Basin (Rule .0317).

*History Note:* Authority G.S. 143-214.1; 143-215.1; 143-215.3(a)(1);  
Eff. February 1, 1976;  
Amended Eff. August 1, 1995; August 3, 1992; August 1, 1990; October 1, 1989.

**.0305 WATAUGA RIVER BASIN**

- (a) The schedule may be inspected at the following places:
  - (1) Clerk of Court:  
Avery County  
Watauga County
  - (2) North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources  
Asheville Regional Office  
Interchange Building  
59 Woodfin Place  
Asheville, North Carolina.
- (b) Unnamed Streams. Such streams entering the State of Tennessee are classified "C."
- (c) The Watauga River Basin Schedule of Classifications and Water Quality Standards was amended effective:
  - (1) August 12, 1979;
  - (2) February 1, 1986;
  - (3) October 1, 1987;
  - (4) August 1, 1989;
  - (5) August 1, 1990;
  - (6) December 1, 1990;
  - (7) April 1, 1992;
  - (8) August 3, 1992;
  - (9) February 1, 1993;
  - (10) April 1, 1994;
  - (11) August 1, 1998.
- (d) The Schedule of Classifications and Water Quality Standards for the Watauga River Basin was amended effective July 1, 1989 as follows:
  - (1) Dutch Creek (Index No. 8-11) was reclassified from Class C-trout to Class B-trout.
  - (2) Pond Creek (Index No. 8-20-2) from water supply intake (located just above Tamarack Road) to Beech Creek and all tributary waters were reclassified from Class WS-III to C.
- (e) The Schedule of Classifications and Water Quality Standards for the Watauga River Basin was amended effective December 1, 1990 with the reclassification of the Watauga River from the US Highway 321 bridge to the North Carolina/Tennessee state line from Class C to Class B.
- (f) The Schedule of Classifications and Water Quality Standards for the Watauga River Basin was amended effective April 1, 1992 with the reclassification of Pond Creek from Classes WS-III and C to Classes WS-III Trout and C Trout
- (g) The Schedule of Classifications and Water Quality Standards for the Watauga River Basin was amended effective August 3, 1992 with the reclassification of all water supply waters (waters with a primary classification of WS-I, WS-II or WS-III). These waters were reclassified to WS-I, WS-II, WS-III, WS-IV or WS-V as defined in the revised water supply protection rules, (15A NCAC 2B .0100, .0200 and .0300) which became effective on August 3, 1992. In some cases, streams with primary classifications other than WS were reclassified to a WS classification due to their proximity and linkage to water supply waters. In other cases, waters were reclassified from a WS classification to an alternate appropriate primary classification after being identified as downstream of a water supply intake or identified as not being used for water supply purposes.
- (h) The Schedule of Classifications and Water Quality Standards for the Watauga River Basin has been amended effective February 1, 1993 with the reclassification of Boone Fork (Index No. 8-7) and all tributary waters from Classes C Tr HQW and C HQW to Classes C Tr ORW and C ORW.
- (i) The Schedule of Classifications and Water Quality Standards for the Watauga River Basin has been amended effective April 1, 1994 with the reclassification of the Elk River from Peavine Branch to the North Carolina/Tennessee state line [Index No. 8-22-(3)] from Class C Tr to Class B Tr.
- (j) The Schedule of Classifications and Water Quality Standards for the Watauga River Basin has been amended effective August 1, 1998 with the reclassification of East Fork Pond Creek from its source to the backwater of Santis Lake, [Index No. 8-20-2-1.5] from Class WS-II Tr to Class WS-III Tr; the reclassification of West Fork Pond Creek (Santis Lake) [Index No. 8-20-2-1-(2)] from the backwaters of Santis Lake to Pond Creek from WS-II TrCA to WS-III Tr CA; and the reclassification of the connecting stream of Lake Coffey [Index No. 8-20-2-2] from the dam at Lake Coffey to Pond Creek from WS-II Tr CA to C Tr.

*History Note: Authority G.S. 143-214.1; 143-215.1; 143-215.3(a)(1);  
Eff. February 1, 1976;*

*Amended Eff. August 1, 1998; April 1, 1994; February 1, 1993; August 3, 1992; April 1, 1992.*

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Name of Stream	Description	Class	Classification	
			Date	Index No.
WATAUGA RIVER	From source to U.S. Hwy. 321 Bridge	B Tr HQW	8/1/90	8-(1)
Shanty Spring Branch	From source to Watauga River	C	5/15/63	8-2
Green Ridge Branch	From source to Watauga River	C	5/15/63	8-3
Valley Creek	From source to Watauga River	C Tr	7/1/73	8-4
Unnamed Tributary to Watauga River (Seven Devils Resort Lake)	From source to dam at Seven Devils Resort Lake	B Tr	10/1/87	8-4.5-(1)
Unnamed Tributary to Watauga River	From dam at Seven Devils Resort Lake to Watauga River	C Tr	7/1/73	8-4.5-(2)
Moody Mill Creek	From source to Watauga River	C Tr	7/1/73	8-5
Spice Bottom Creek	From source to Moody Mill Creek	C Tr	7/1/73	8-5-1
Unnamed Tributary at Camp Rainbow	From source to Watauga River	C Tr	5/15/63	8-6
Boone Fork (Price Lake)	From source to Watauga River	C Tr ORW	2/1/93	8-7
Cold Prong	From source to Boone Fork	C Tr ORW	2/1/93	8-7-1
Laurel Creek	From source to Price Lake, Boone Fork	C Tr ORW	2/1/93	8-7-2
Sims Creek (Sims Pond)	From source to Boone Fork	C Tr ORW	2/1/93	8-7-3
Hoot Camp Branch	From source to Sims Creek	C ORW	2/1/93	8-7-3-1
Green Branch	From source to Boone Fork	C ORW	2/1/93	8-7-4
Cannon Branch	From source to Boone Fork	C ORW	2/1/93	8-7-5
Bee Tree Creek	From source to Boone Fork	C ORW	2/1/93	8-7-6
Lance Creek	From source to Dam at Camp Yonahlossee Bathing Lake	B Tr	7/1/73	8-8-(1)
Lance Creek	From Camp Yonahlossee Bathing Lake to Watauga River	C Tr	7/1/73	8-8-(2)
Big Branch	From source to Watauga River	C	5/15/63	8-9
Laurel Fork	From source to Watauga River	C Tr	5/15/63	8-10
Harrison Branch	From source to Laurel Fork	C	5/15/63	8-10-1
Unnamed Tributary at N.C. Prison Unit # 116	From source to Laurel Fork	C	5/15/63	8-10-2
Upper Laurel Fork	From source to Laurel Fork	C	5/15/63	8-10-3
Hayes Branch	From source to Upper Laurel Fork	C	5/15/63	8-10-3-1
Lost Branch	From source to Watauga River	C Tr	5/15/63	8-11
Dutch Creek	From source to Clark Creek	B Tr	7/1/89	8-12-(0.5)
Pigeonroost Creek	From source to Dutch Creek	B	7/1/89	8-12-1
Dutch Creek	From Clark Creek to Watauga County SR 1112	C Tr	5/15/63	8-12-(1.5)
Clark Creek	From source to Dutch Creek	C	5/15/63	8-12-2
Craborchard Creek	From source to Dutch Creek	C Tr	5/15/63	8-12-3
Dutch Creek	From Watauga County SR 1112 to Watauga River	B Tr	7/1/89	8-12-(3.5)
Baird Creek	From source to Watauga River	C	5/15/63	8-13
Mirefield Creek	From source to Baird Creek	C	5/15/63	8-13-1
Big Branch	From source to Watauga River	C	5/15/63	8-14
Cove Creek	From source to Watauga River	C	5/15/63	8-15
Ellison Branch	From source to Cove Creek	C Tr	7/1/73	8-15-1
North Fork Ellison Branch	From source to Ellison Branch	C	5/15/63	8-15-1-1
South Fork Ellison Branch	From source to Ellison Branch	C	5/15/63	8-15-1-2

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Name of Stream	Description	Class	Classification	
			Date	Index No.
North Fork Cove Creek	From source to Cove Creek	C	5/15/63	8-15-2
Long Branch	From source to Cove Creek	C	5/15/63	8-15-3
Kirby Branch	From source to Cove Creek	C	5/15/63	8-15-4
Sawyer Creek	From source to Cove Creek	C	5/15/63	8-15-5
North Fork Sawyer Creek	From source to Sawyer Creek	C	5/15/63	8-15-5-1
Sharp Creek	From source to Cove Creek	C	5/15/63	8-15-6
Laurel Branch	From source to Cove Creek	C	5/15/63	8-15-7
Vanderpool Creek	From source to Cove Creek	C	5/15/63	8-15-8
George Gap Branch	From source to Cove Creek	C	5/15/63	8-15-9
Brushy Fork	From source to Cove Creek	C	5/15/63	8-15-10
Linville Creek	From source to Brushy Fork	C	5/15/63	8-15-10-1
George Branch	From source to Brushy Fork	C	5/15/63	8-15-10-2
Phillips Branch	From source to Cove Creek	C	5/15/63	8-15-11
East Fork Phillips Branch	From source to Phillips Branch	C	5/15/63	8-15-11-1
WATAUGA RIVER	From U.S. Hwy. 321 to North Carolina-Tennessee State Line	B HQW	12/1/90	8-(16)
Laurel Creek	From source to Watauga River	C Tr	5/15/63	8-17
Worley Creek	From source to Laurel Creek	C Tr	5/15/63	8-17-1
Spice Branch (Creek)	From source to Laurel Creek	C	5/15/63	8-17-2
Rush Branch	From source to Watauga River	C	5/15/63	8-18
Beaverdam Creek	From source to Watauga River	C Tr	5/15/63	8-19
Forest Grove Creek	From source to Beaverdam Creek	C	5/15/63	8-19-1
Little Beaverdam Creek	From source to Beaverdam Creek	C Tr	7/1/73	8-19-2
Jones Branch	From source to Little Beaverdam Creek	C	5/15/63	8-19-2-1
Fork Branch	From source to Little Beaverdam Creek	C	5/15/63	8-19-2-2
Rube Creek	From source to Beaverdam Creek	C	5/15/63	8-19-3
Cornett Branch	From source to Rube Creek	C	5/15/63	8-19-3-1
West Fork Rube Creek	From source to Rube Creek	C	5/15/63	8-19-3-2
Beech Creek	From source to Watauga River	C Tr	5/15/63	8-20
Sawmill Branch	From source to Beech Creek	C Tr	5/15/63	8-20-1
Pond Creek	From source (at dam of Santis Lake) to Beech Creek	C Tr	8/3/92	8-20-2
West Fork Pond Creek	From source to backwaters of Santis Lake	WS-II Tr	8/3/92	8-20-2-1-(1)
West Fork Pond Creek (Santis Lake)	From backwaters of Santis Lake to Pond Creek	WS-III Tr CA	8/1/98	8-20-2-1-(2)
East Fork Pond Creek	From source to backwaters of Santis Lake, West Fork Pond Creek	WS-III Tr	8/1/98	8-20-2-2
Unnamed Tributary to Pond Creek (Lake Coffey)	From source to dam at Lake Coffey (Town of Beech Mountain, Beech Mountain Resort, Inc. water supply intake)	WS-II Tr CA	8/3/92	8-20-2.5-(1)
Unnamed Tributary to Pond Creek	From dam at Lake Coffey to Pond Creek	C Tr	8/1/98	8-20-2.5-(2)
Buckeye Creek	From source to a point 0.2 mile downstream of Bear Branch	WS-II Tr	8/3/92	8-20-3-(0.5)
Bear Branch	From source to Buckeye Creek	WS-II	8/3/92	8-20-3-1
Buckeye Creek	From a point 0.2 mile downstream of	WS-II Tr CA	8/3/92	8-20-3-(1.5)



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Name of Stream	Description	Class	Classification	
			Date	Index No.
	Bear Branch to Town of Beech Mountain water supply intake located 0.3 mile upstream of mouth of Grassy Gap Creek			
New Branch	From source to a point 0.3 mile upstream of mouth	WS-II	8/3/92	8-20-3-2-(1)
New Branch	From a point 0.3 mile upstream of mouth to Buckeye Creek	WS-II CA	8/3/92	8-20-3-2-(2)
Buckeye Creek	From Town of Beech Mountain water supply intake to Beech Creek	C Tr	7/1/73	8-20-3-(2.5)
Grassy Gap Creek (Grassy Gap Branch)	From source to Buckeye Creek	C	5/15/63	8-20-3-3
Cannon Branch	From source to Buckeye Creek	C	5/15/63	8-20-3-4
Clingman Mine Branch	From source to Buckeye Creek	C	5/15/63	8-20-3-5
Phillips Branch	From source to Beech Creek	C	5/15/63	8-20-4
Poga Creek (Flat Springs Creek)	From North Carolina-Tennessee State Line to Beech Creek	C Tr	7/1/73	8-20-5
Flat Springs Branch	From source to Poga Creek	C	5/15/63	8-20-5-1
Stone Mountain Branch	From source to Watauga River	C	5/15/63	8-21
Elk River (Banner Elk Creek)	From source to Sugar Creek	C	5/15/63	8-22-(1)
Flattop Creek	From source to Elk River	C	5/15/63	8-22-2
Bee Branch	From source to Flattop Creek	C	5/15/63	8-22-2-1
Elk River (Mill Pond)	From Sugar Creek to Peavine Creek	C Tr	5/15/63	8-22-(3)
Sugar Creek	From source to Elk River	C Tr	5/15/63	8-22-4
Hanging Rock Creek (Elk Creek)	From source to Elk River	C Tr	7/1/73	8-22-5
Horse Bottom Creek	From source to Hanging Rock Creek	C Tr	7/1/73	8-22-5-1
Unnamed Tributary to Elk River at Grandfather Home	From source to Elk River	C	5/15/63	8-22-6
Shawneehaw Creek	From source to Mill Pond, Elk River	C Tr	7/1/73	8-22-7
Wildcat Creek (Wildcat Lake)	From source to Dam at Wildcat Lake	B	5/15/63	8-22-8-(1)
Wildcat Creek	From Dam at Wildcat Lake to Elk River	C	5/15/63	8-22-8-(2)
Leroy Creek	From source to Elk River	C	5/15/63	8-22-9
Whitehead Creek	From source to Elk River	C Tr	7/1/73	8-22-10
Clear Branch	From source to Elk River	C	5/15/63	8-22-11
Ramp Branch	From source to Elk River	C	5/15/63	8-22-12
Horney Branch (Whitehead Creek)	From source to Elk River	C Tr	5/15/63	8-22-13
Lee Branch (Hickory Branch)	From source to Horney Branch	C	5/15/63	8-22-13-1
Puckett Branch	From source to Lee Branch	C	5/15/63	8-22-13-1-1
Peavine Branch	From source to Elk River	C Tr	5/15/63	8-22-14
Elk River	From Peavine Branch to North Carolina-Tennessee State Line	B Tr	4-1-94	8-22-(14.5)
Curtis Creek	From source to Elk River	C Tr	5/15/63	8-22-15
Cranberry Creek	From source to Elk River	C Tr	5/15/63	8-22-16
Cooper Branch	From source to Cranberry Creek	C	5/15/63	8-22-16-1
Blevins Creek	From source to Cranberry Creek	C Tr	5/15/63	8-22-16-2

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Name of Stream	Description	Class	Classification	
			Date	Index No.
Greenbrier Creek	From source to Blevins Creek	C Tr	5/15/63	8-22-16-2-1
Miller Branch	From source to Cranberry Creek	C	5/15/63	8-22-16-3
Little Elk Creek	From source to Elk River	C Tr	5/15/63	8-22-17
Skalley Branch	From source to Elk River	C Tr	7/1/73	8-22-18
Mill Creek	From North Carolina-Tennessee State Line to Elk River	C Tr	7/1/73	8-22-19
Fall Creek	From source to Elk River	C Tr	7/1/73	8-22-20
Jones Branch (Jones Falls Branch)	From North Carolina-Tennessee State Line to Elk River	C	5/15/63	8-22-21
Pine Camp Branch	From source to North Carolina- Tennessee State Line	C	5/15/63	8-22-22
Nowhere Branch (Stony Creek)	From source to North Carolina- Tennessee State Line	C	5/15/63	8-22-23
Trivett Branch (Dark Ridge Branch)	From source to North Carolina- Tennessee State Line	C	5/15/63	8-22-23-1
Buck Creek	From source to North Carolina- Tennessee State Line	C	5/15/63	8-23-1
State Line Branch	From North Carolina-Tennessee State Line to Buck Creek	C	5/15/63	8-23-1-1
Bear Branch	From source to North Carolina- Tennessee State Line	C	5/15/63	8-23-1-2

Note: "CA" means critical area